

E P I S T O L A R

FROM

MADAME DE L'ÉPIQUE

IN THREE VOLUMES

(Price TWO SHILLINGS)





*Hail! Thou Production most uncommon,
Woman half-man and man half-Woman!*

Vid: Epistle.

AN
E P I S T L E
FROM

MADemoisELLE D'EON

TO THE

Right Honorable L--D M-----D,

L--D C---F J-----E OF THE C---T OF K--G's B---H,

On his DETERMINATION in regard to her SEX.

Juvenis quondam, nunc fœmina, Cæneus,
Rursus et in veterem fato revoluta figuram.

VIRG. Æn. 6. l. 448.

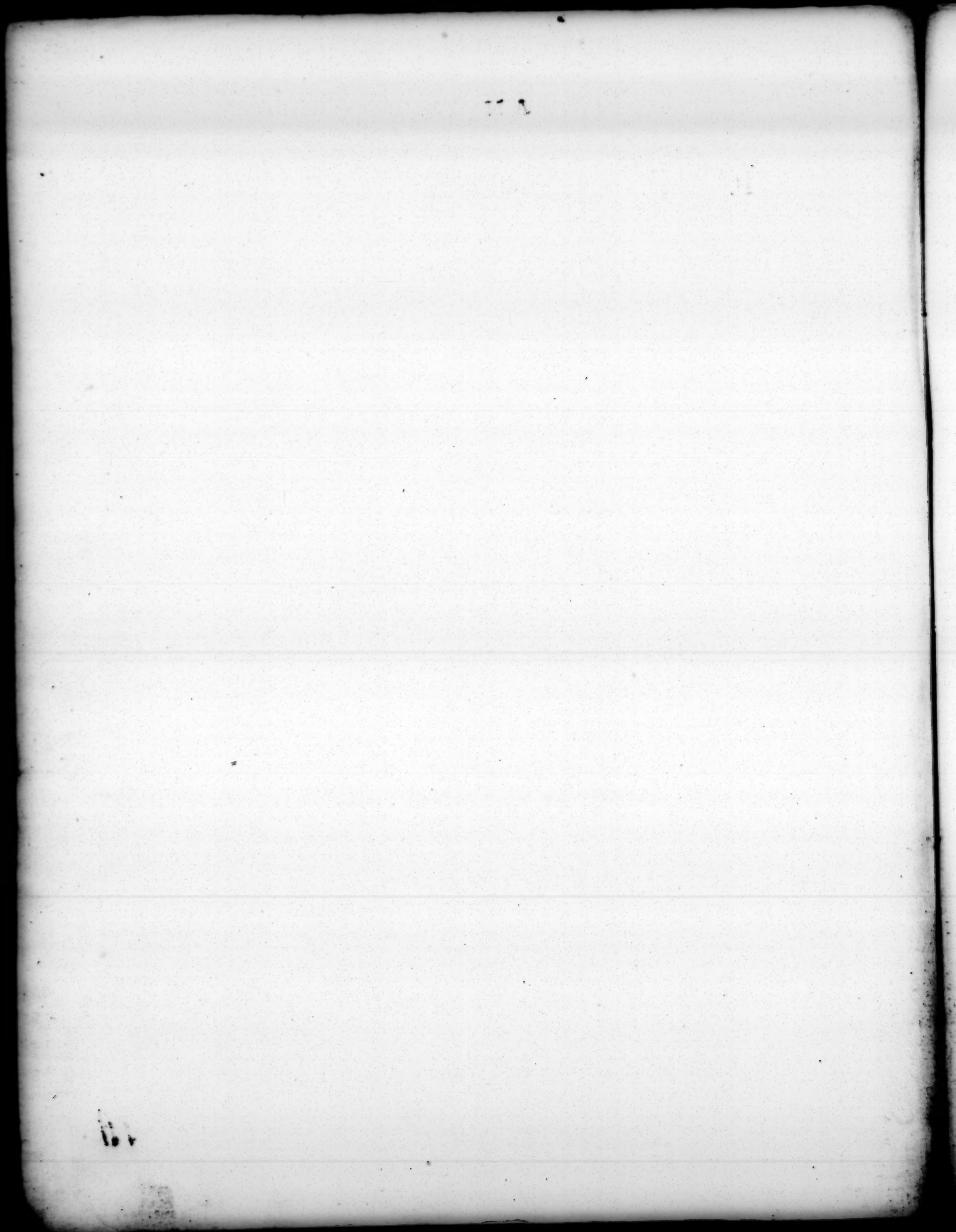
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M,DCC,LXXVIII.



10.



DEDICATION.

To the Right Honorable LADY M***F***D.

MADAM,

THOUGH, in this age of gallantry, it may seem somewhat strange to deliver a challenge to the husband into the hands of the wife; yet there is something in your ladyship's character that will easily reconcile this seeming impropriety. The timidity or jealousy which marks the greatest part of womankind, would probably prevent most husbands from receiving
a such

such a summons : but there is a noble boldness in your ladyship's conduct which is superior to such frailties, and you are so far from restraining your husband peacefully at home, that you are happy when fresh occasions call forth in him fresh courage. In this light, and with this idea, Mademoiselle D'Eon's Epistle to Lord M---f---d is dedicated to you : though at the same time I cannot but acknowledge it contains a proposal somewhat odd, and what modern fashions only have allowed to be communicated to a wife. As, however, there are some uninformed people who have no taste, who may think some apology necessary for such a Dedication, I am happy in having so good a one in the detail of your ladyship's virtues. You are one of those few women who can prefer the reputation of your husband to any private advantage of your own ; and instead of being jealous of the love which your lord universally excites,

excites, you can look on that love with pleasure, and think it (as it really is) the strongest proof of his lordship's undoubted greatness.

It is this temper of mind which marks the superiority of your character. It is this temper of mind, so different from what other women possess, which makes you rather glory in having less of your husband, whilst he is exerting himself for the good of the Public.

But if we wanted any further proof of your excellence, we might find it by taking a survey of your ladyship in private life, and in the discharge of those little domestic offices which women of your rank are too apt to neglect. Instead of wasting the day on beds of down, and lamenting that the sun dared to shine to interrupt

rupt a Festino, or a Pantheon ; you wake with the lark to prepare your husband for the fatigue of the law.

How happy are you, madam, in possessing a philosophic temper, which has kept you clear of those rocks on which other women have split ! You have never deviated into the paths of folly with the daughters of pleasure or sons of revelry ; for where is the rake, however irresistible, and however impudent, who can boast that he has pluckt one trophy from your ladyship's reputation, or even entertained such a thought.

If then the order of things, which no one can prevent, has destined that Lord M---f---d and
Ma-

Mademoiselle D'Eon should come together, that these two bright luminaries should be in conjunction, and your ladyship's lustre be diminished, you will have the consolation of thinking that you have once enjoyed the greatest of men, and that you now give him up to the greatest of women ; a woman did I say--- something more than woman ; but who would have lain dormant, like some well-drawn picture, beauteous, though immodest, had not your husband removed the veil which concealed her nakedness, and exposed her to the Public. I have the honor to be,

With great respect,

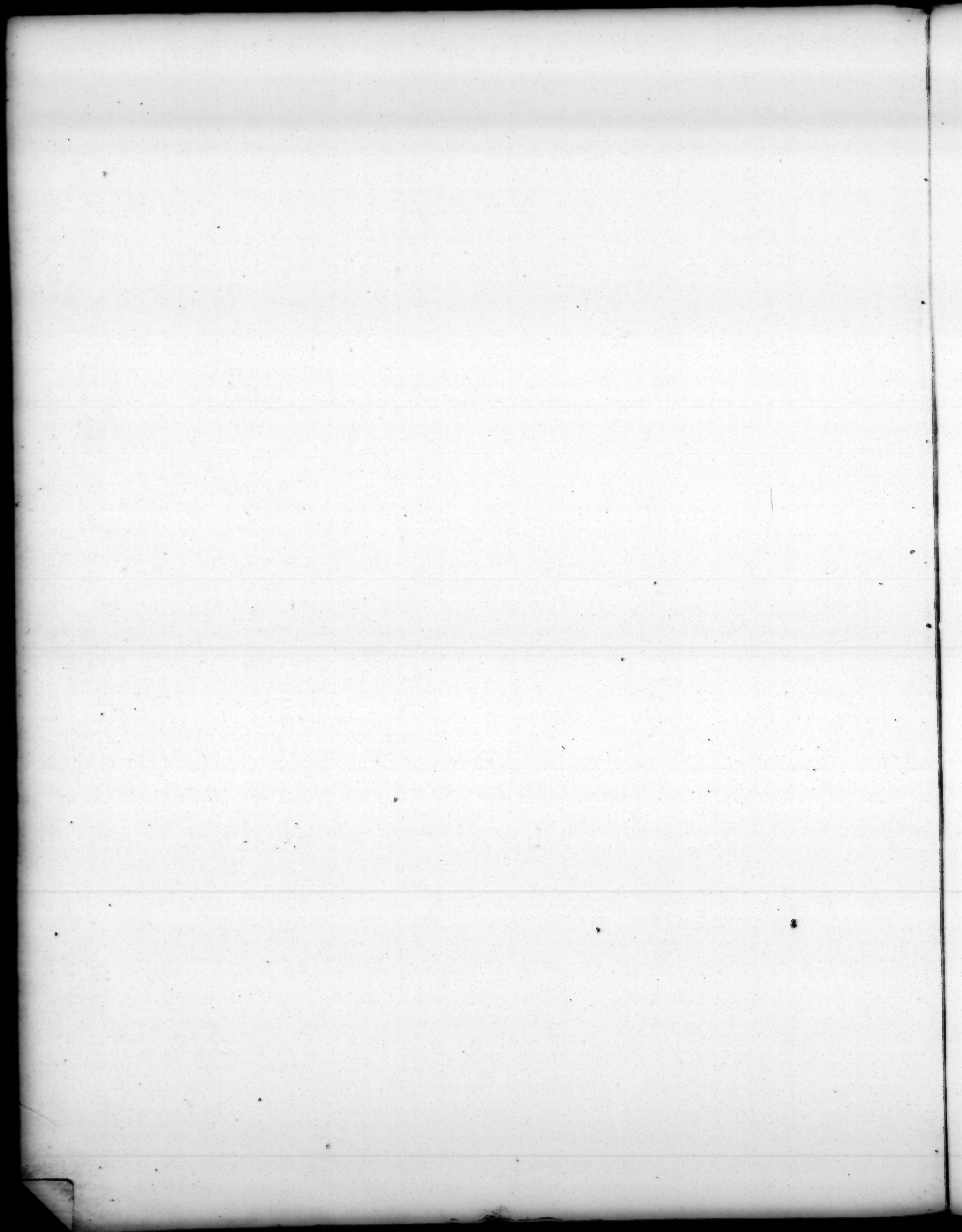
Your ladyship's

devoted servant,

The EDITOR.

b

THE



THE
EDITOR'S
PREFACE.

THE following Poem was written originally in French by the celebrated Mademoiselle D'Eon. Deprived by L--D M---F---D's determination in the Court of King's Bench of the semblance of that manhood which had long been the subject of general dispute, and various policies, she was obliged to leave *England*, and fly to *France*. From that country this Letter was intended to have been sent, as a just tribute to his Lordship's wisdom and precision, and at the same time to conciliate his patronage on her intended return to *England*. After it had been shewn to many of her acquaintance,

quaintance, and much admired at *Paris*, it fell into the hands of the Editor. As it related to the manners, as well as the people of this country, he thought an *English* dress would best become it, and accordingly has given it to the public in a translation. At the worst he flatters himself, that, like its author, it will not lose its quality, or spirit, however it may have changed its habit.

In some places he has indeed taken the liberty of deviating a little from the original, especially in some of the concluding stanzas, where Mademoiselle, in her address to his Lordship, and in the warmth of her imagination, had indulged a vein rather too luxuriant. In short, she seemed to have forgotten that she was now in petticoats. He has added likewise some explanatory Notes, where the very extraordinary personages introduced in the poem seemed to require some comment.

He hopes, however, that the Public will not think their time lost in perusing this translation, or blame him for communicating to them so just an eulogium on the character of L---D M---F---D.

A N

E P I S T L E, &c.

ILLUSTRIOUS Ruler of those Courts

Where puzzled Justice scarce reports

Her dubious decrees !

Where honest Lawyers find a flaw

In every particle of law,

-----Except in double fees :

If now with writs of Error big

You shake your inauspicious wig,

And blind each ermin'd brother ;

B

Who

Who lost amidst the darken'd ray,
 Like Ajax, vainly call for day,
 Nor right from wrong discover :

Or emulating *Mead* or *Hulse*,
 If now you feel poor England's pulse---
 ---No doctor ever surer ;
 And pitying her despairing way,
 Bring † Scotch physicians into play,
 Of all complaints to cure her :

Or if than * *M--n-rs* self more great,
 Full of the secrets of the state,
 To CHANGE you now repair ;

Where

† Dr. Johnson has observed in his Tour through Scotland, that though the land is not productive of grass, it is very fertile in thistles.---This remark might have been extended to the inhabitants of the country, which though very barren in wits, is very fertile of physicians.---These gentlemen having cured all the disorders of their own countrymen, are so kind to come to town in droves to assist us ; witness the extraordinary cures with which the London newspapers abound, and which are so notorious, that our very posts and walls speak of them.

* Of this gentleman there is no occasion to give any account ; as there is scarce a man of any consequence in Europe who has not the misfortune to be acquainted with
 h.m.

Where Broker, Israelite, and Cit,
All characters alike you hit,
By turns both *Bull* and *Bear* :

Or if allur'd by softer scenes,
And tir'd of vain ambition's schemes,
You fly to C--n-Wood's bower ;
Where lull'd in *Lady M---f---d's* arms,
You moralize o'er faded charms,
And beauty's short-liv'd power :

Forgive an unexperienc'd maid,
Who really feels herself afraid,
As every maid should be ;
If she amidst the noise and strife
You find from senates, courts, or---wife,
Dare offer up her plea !

And

And may the power of soft persuasion

But aid a nymph on this occasion,

And once at least regard her !

Relentless *Pluto's* iron heart

Confess'd the force of female art,

---And M---F---D's is not harder.

To charm you, shall I speak each deed,

Which every lass on banks of Tweed

Relates with admiration,

When high in health and youthful blood,

E'en then a prodigy you stood

For parts and penetration ?

Or shall I say with what applause

You pleaded exil'd Stuart's cause ?

---Lawyers will have their jokes :

Kings

* Kings in effect are like each other,

You only took the one for t'other

----- *John Stiles for John O'Nokes.*

† But times are chang'd, your awful word

Now bids Rebellion sheath her sword,

Nor break her filial ties :

Wifely selected sure, to quell

Those broils you understand so well,

‡ By sad experience wise.

So when the arts of Warwick-lane,

Long with the burning fever's pain

Have held unequal strife ;

* It has been disputed whether instinct in the brute creation was not a more certain guide than reason in the human species, but Lord M---f---d has certainly determined the superiority of the former. Shakespeare says, "The lyon knows the true prince by instinct." Which his Lordship, once in his life, could not discover by reason.

† Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis.

‡ Experto crede Roberto.

Some good, old, second-sighted dame
With tried receipt attacks the flame,
And saves the patient's life.

Or if these deeds of youthful rage
Now sadden life's more prudent page,
And memory gives you pain,
What softer title soothes your ear,
Chief Justice, Counsellor, or Peer ?

" Answer me, loyal Thane !"

Born in a low, obscure retreat,
Where Indigence had fix'd her seat,

My parentage was poor :

Our poverty needed no guard ;

No English * mastiff watched our yard,

Nor blunderbuss our door.

* Mademoiselle D'Eon seems here to imagine that the mastiff and the blunderbuss were sufficient safe-guards against thieves. But Sir John Fielding, who certainly is more acquainted with the subject, has plainly shewn us that the surest way is, to set one thief to catch another.

Unvaried flow'd each cheerless day,
 And oft in tears I used to stray
 Beneath some lonely shade :
 Yet there impatient to begin,
 I felt the spirit * stir within,
 And powers above a maid.

Oft when my Mother's stern command
 Would place the distaff in my hand,
 And house-hold's cares would vex ;
 Like Cato's daughter fierce and loud,
 † I left behind the female croud,
 " And tower'd above my sex."

* This species of divinity is not confined to one sex only, for Addison informs us, it stirr'd within Cato. Vide Act V. Scene I.

† The people who listen to this sort of spirit, ought to be on their guard, as there is no saying where these inward feelings will lead to.

In

In vain she gave me girlish toys,

I lov'd the company of boys :

----- They were my only theme :

With open legs I strode the steed ;

With stronger arm and swifter speed

I pass'd th' opposing stream,

Then as they shew'd each naked charm,

My eager senses took th' alarm,

And gazed without design :

Then would I look beneath the tide,

Lament what Nature had denied,

And curse a form like mine.

“ 'Tis true, like many a married dame,

“ I might assert a common claim,

“ And wear my husband's breeches ;

“ But then I submit to man,

“ And that I'm sure was n'er my plan

----- My Lord, I love plain speeches.

“ But

“ But is there no way left ?” I said,
 “ Can’t I be breech’d, and be a Maid ?
 “ Yes, certainly I can.”

Thus duly reasoning pro and con,
 I boldly put the breeches on,
 And fallied forth—a Man.

At first I fear’d my beardless face
 Would bring my manhood to disgrace,
 And check my promis’d fame:
 But when I cast around my view,
 I found mankind a pigmy crew,
 All Women—but in name.

But Mars, who always pleas’d a woman,
 Offer’d me pleasures more than common,
 And promis’d untried charms :
 The martial life and gay cockade
 Soon banish’d what remain’d of Maid,
 And summon’d me to arms.

D

Like

Like *Pucelle d'Orleans* of old, *
 I thought all female charms well fold
 For glory, and for plunder;
 Records could tell each bloody story—
 But this a Maid may say before you,
 † No Man e'er got me under.

When at my feet the vanquish'd lay,
 Virgins unravish'd went away;
 ---- Tho' Widows curs'd the hour.
 Thus I, as virtuous and as bold,
 Like the great Scipio of old,
 Was chaste---for want of power.

But when these jars and broils were over,
 I could not personate the Lover,
 Nor fill the tasteless void:

* It is difficult to determine to what particular duty Mademoiselle D'Eon here alludes, as Mr. Voltaire mentions that the *Pucelle d'Orleans* underwent many duties which were not strictly military, though probably equally fatiguing.

† This indeed is more than the *Maid of Orleans* could possibly assert.

And

And when with joy each amorous dame
Clasp'd to her breast her wish'd-for Swain,
Poor I was unemploy'd.

My active soul, thus hating rest,
Each novel object still caress'd,

As wayward fancy led :
Now warm'd by mad Ambition's dreams,
To Politician's tempting schemes
I gave my maiden head.

'Twas then to Albion's happy plains
I bent my way, where Freedom reigns

O'er Cobblers, and o'er Peers ;
Blest country ! where in judgment sit
O'er virtue, property, and wit,

Bawds, Jews, and Auctioneers.

E'en *there* my parts distinguish'd grew ;
Chatbam and *Chesterfield* I knew,
By more than by their faces ;

When

When one was in, t'other was out :

The first was martyr to the Gout,

The second to the *Graces.

To me the Marquis too was kind,

That *Marquis* who has taught mankind

A Wentworth can be frail :

Ungrateful Naples, to dismember

† Those parts for ever and for ever,

And leave nor head nor tail !

A better fate was old Shebbeare's,

Who left on posts his forfeit ears,

(Your Lordship knows the story)

Yet he survives such foul disgrace,

His ears are well supplied by Place,

—And Wig conceals the Tory.

* Mademoiselle asserts this from her own knowledge, as it is well known that she studied graceful postures under Lord Chesterfield.

† The princess of Villa-Franca with great sincerity informed his Lordship of her situation ; but he, more mad than Empedocles, jumped amidst the flames.

S--dw--b, that Prince of Catch and Glee,

With chearing *Ray* too smil'd on me;

Him Folly marks her own ;

* He blends all business with his sport,

Then hies from Kettledrums to Court,

Now Statesman, now Buffoon.

Lo ! the great Man by virtue fir'd, †

Who never but at Sounds expir'd,

Sounds from Italian dames ;

See him burlesque the cares of state,

Like Nero, musically great,

Fiddling amidst the flames.

* This is supposed to allude to the manner and to the company in which his Lordship takes a survey of the British Ports and Navy. Marshal Saxe has indeed observed, in his military treatise, that all warlike operations should be conducted with music. His Lordship is of this opinion, and is never without a full band, castrati, &c. &c. And there is no doubt but it must be highly inspiring to the British sailor to hear Teneduei warble forth "O qui gusto!"

† "Lo ! the brave Youth by virtue fir'd,
"Who nobly in his Country's cause expir'd."

CATO.

E

For

For me too many a British Toast
 Exhausted all their charms could boast,
 Their tears, their sighs in vain;
 Their nets they spread with nicest art,
 But little thought a Sister's heart
 Was all they could obtain.

by the
 Dame *H-rr--gt-n*, with lecherous leer,
 Inured to shame, unawed by fear,
 Would tap me with her fan;
 Then would she fix and ardent gaze,
 The ling'ring spark would try to raise,
 And warm me into Man.

But when she found on every trial
 She met with nothing but denial,
 By disappointment bold,

She

She seem'd with hopeless looks to say,

“ Can one so form'd for amorous play,

“ Possess a heart so cold ? ” *

Lady Anker

That Proserpine of Portman-square

Her darling money did not spare

To bribe me to her arms ;

Hungry and fierce she sprung upon me,

One moment more she had undone me,

By seeing all my charms.

So when some cat, both grey and blind,

Bent to destroy the vermin kind,

A modest mouse has taken ;

Her conscious tail insures the prize :

But quick, the little reptile flies,

And saves itself, and bacon——

* It is something surprising that her Ladyship should be astonished at any thing cold, when nothing can be well colder than her Husband.

Thus

Thus had each Nymph of loveliest ray
Perceiv'd her arts were thrown away,

And still I 'scaped the snare :

“ Oh ! cried *Jack Cavendish*, 'tis so,

“ He's one of us ; well, let him go,

“ We'll suit him to a hair.”

These doubtful accents scarce I heard,

When *D-m-r*'s pallid form appear'd,

Like Beauty's setting sun ;

Fondly they clasp'd each other's waist,

Then talk'd of Sappho's purer taste,

And Maids themselves had won.

Such were the scenes, my Lord, I prov'd,

• And neither loving nor belov'd,

I was *myself alone* ;

* This circumstance, though simple in itself, may have some weight with his Lordship, as he has long been in the same situation.

Each.

Each lusty youth rais'd new desire,

At every maid's extinguish'd fire

I heav'd an envious moan-----

And that best comfort here below,

Friendship, it was not mine to know ;

But doom'd to be undone,

Too sure I found, that spite of art,

And weak disguise, in woman's heart

Friendship and Love are one-----

Full many a year was gone and past

Since Nature form'd my swelling breast,

And stamp'd the woman there ;

Gave the first spark of young desire,

Which from the eyes darts liquid fire

And curls the wanton hair-----

Yet never had I known the bliss

That follows the impassioned kiss,

Which man alone can give :

F

Ne'er

Ne'er had I felt that panting, fighting,
The warm ecstatic sense of dying,
That makes it Heaven to live.

One night, when silence reign'd profound,
Save where the Watch forgot his round,
And snor'd the hours away ;
As I with various cares oppress'd,
In vain invok'd propitious rest
To chace my griefs away ;

Full slowly to my wond'ring view
A bloated form of pallid hue,
It's shapeless length uprear'd ;

It's aged head a mitre wore.
A crozier in one hand it bore,
The other dead appear'd.

“ My child, it cried, dispell thy grief,
“ To give thy bosom wish'd relief,
“ I leave my Windsor's shade,

“ A powe

“ A power unseen old *K-pp-l* sends,

“ To execute it's awful ends,

“ And satisfy a maid.

“ With pain I see thy life unblest,

“ Those tempting limbs, that heaving breast,

“ Inactive, unemploy'd,

“ Shame! that thy powers should thus be lost,

“ All hopes of propagation crost,

“ * And *Heaven's commandment* void-----

“ Thou knowest not the joys in store,

“ Which I and many bishops more,

“ Full oft perform in common ;

“ Strip off thy breeches, foul disguise!

“ To play the man thy form denies,

“ And therefore act the woman.

* This, the eleventh commandment, is in general better observed than any of the other ten, particularly amongst the clergy.

“ A race

" A race there is mark'd out by nature,

" As black in morals as in feature,

" The worshippers of PELF,

" Who exiled roam the spacious earth,

" Conceiv'd in sin, and in their birth

" Accurs'd by God himself.

" No human sympathies they know,

" They never feel another's woe,

" Or weep another's pain,

" Extortion marks their damned course,

" They bless, blaspheme, eat pork, or worse

" They starve themselves for gain:

" All vile dishonest parts they play,

" Pimp, pedlar, auctioneer to-day,

" Annuitant to-morrow :

" Money to them is food and raiment ;

" Before they lend they ask for payment,

" And do all things but---borrow.

" Such

" Such Men, my child, are lawful prize;
 " Heaven grants to you the sacrifice,
 ----- " No Paschal Lamb but gold :
 " Your doubtful Sex becomes the bet,
 " The insurance is already set-----
 " Accept it, and *be bold*. "

" So shall applauding parents see
 " Their spendthrift heirs preserv'd by thee,
 " Nor weep their mortgaged hall;
 " Swindlers shall curse thy native moor,
 " By thee whole synagogues shall mourn,
 " † And Ufury's self shall fall.

• This is a species of ~~fascination~~ *fascination* that is peculiar to Newmarket, White's, Almack's, and other fashionable places, and seems perfectly independent either of the nerves, or a fear of shame. It has frequently happened that some of the most notorious cowards have possessed it, and at the moment they have felt themselves the most bold, have tamely submitted to be kicked out of the room.

† The Editor has searched every scriptural record, but cannot find any mention of this overthrow of the Synagogue.

G

" But:

" But if there's one yet blasted more

" Than all his tribe, 'tis *S-lv-d-re*,

" Of him you must beware :

" On his white beard fits hoary Sin,

" Foul Letchery wrinkles his old chin,

" Plots lurk in every hair.

" Mark what I say; he'll feign the Lover,

" And if he can, your sex discover ;

----- " For well he Woman knows :

" Be yours to glean the remnant treat ;

" What *Rudd* began, do you complete,

" And fill the Bankrupt's woes.

" What though all Juda's self combine,

" Attornies with attornies join,

" To counteract the laws ;

" Yet

“ Yet that wise Judge, who hates Jews more
 “ Than ever * Scotchman did before,
 “ Will vindicate your cause.

“ Hail! thou production most uncommon,
 “ Woman half-man, and Man half-woman!”

——More he would have spoke,
 When the pale light of morning's dawn
 Quick glancing o'er the Bishop's lawn,
 He vanish'd into smoke.

I rose---and true to his prediction
 I found, my Lord, the thing no fiction:
 -----You issued your award,

* It is remarkable that there never was a Jew seen in Scotland. Whether this arises from the sterility of the country, or from the acuteness of the Scotch themselves, hitherto remains a doubt.

O second Daniel ! 'tis to you
I owe the spoils of many a Jew,
And maiden-hood restor'd.

When Law had given me every thing,
Honour cried, "Go, enrich your king."

—Where devil drives needs must is :

Away to France I therefore sped,
There found I Lewis gone to bed,*
In order to do Justice.

But that cold Prince, a Joseph he,
Blush'd to behold a Maid so free,
And turn'd his head aside ;

* Mademoiselle here alludes to the Bed of Justice, which the French Kings were used to hold on certain occasions. It has been thought that his present most Christian Majesty will drop the custom, as he finds he cannot give satisfaction in that situation.

All lost on him were charms divine,
His royal consort look'd at mine,
Then view'd herself, and sigh'd.

Sick of a land where art, not nature,
Forms every thing, and every creature;
One general masquerade:
To Albion's happier climes I come----
Your kind reply fixes my doom,
Nor let it be delay'd !

To find for your old age one pleasure,
I offer now my virgin treasure,
----Virtue without a flaw:
Too long the sport of all mankind,
One safe asylum let me find,
----- *The bosom of the Law.*

H

And

And the stale partner of your life,
 Who long has borne the name of wife,
 Now cares not how she's put on ;
 * Turn'd out---she'll sure resign her place,
 Your Lordship too loves a new face,
 And younger charms to glut on----

The wond'ring world when they shall see
 You on the genial bed with me,
 Will praise your resolution,
 And as if boil'd in † magic kettle,
 You'll issue forth with added mettle,
 -----All brags and constitution.

* For the meaning of this ask Sir William Meredith.

† -----Infirmum docta novare senem-----

Medea's Receipt.

And

And tho' the courts should be suspended,
 Tho' lawyers wait the business ended,
 And think you wond'rous long ;
 What then ? The world well knows you hear,
 With patient * shrug and callous ear,
 The censures of the Throng.

* Still have I borne it with a patient shrug ;
 For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.

Shakespear's Merchant of Venice,

F I N I S.

This Day is published,

(A NEW EDITION, CORRECTED)

A

SAPPHICK EPISTLE

FROM

JACK CAVENDISH

TO THE

Honourable and most beautiful Mrs. D*,**

